

ANN ASKEW;

Intituled, I am a Woman Poor and Blind, &c.

I Am a Woman poor and blind,
and little knowledge remains in me;
Long have I sought, but vain would find,
what Seed in my Garden were best to be.

I Garden I have which is unknown,
which God of his goodness gave to me,
I mean my Body, where I should have sown
the Seed of Christ's true Verity.

My Spirit within me is vexed sore,
my Spirit crieth against the same,
My Sorrows do increase more and more,
my Conscience suffereth most bitter pain.

I with my self being thus at strife,
would vain have been at rest,
Pining and dying in mortal life,
what things I might do to please God best.

With whole intent and one accord,
unto a Gardener that I did know,
I went and desired him for the love of the Lord,
true Seed in my Garden for to sow.

Then this proud Gardener seeing me so blind,
he thought on me to work his will,
And flattered me with words so kind,
to have me continue in my blindness still.

He fed me then with lies and mocks,
for Mental Sins, he bid me go
To give my money to Stones and Stocks,
which was stark lies, and nothing so.

With stinking meat then was I fed,
for to keep me from my Salvation,
I had Trentals of Pals, and Balls of Lead,
not one word spoke of Christ's Passion.

In me was sown all kind of feigned Seeds,
with Popish Ceremonies many a one,
Psalms of Requiem, with other juggling Deeds,
till God's Spirit out of my Garden was gone.

Then was I commanded most straitly,
if of my Salvation I would be sure,
To build some Chappel or Chauntry,
to be pray'd for while the World doth endure.

Iware of a new learning (quoth he) it lies,
which is the thing I most abhor,
pebble not with it in any manner of wise,
but was your Fathers have done before.

My trust I did put in the Devil's Works,
thinking sufficient my Soul to save,
Being wiser then either Jews or Turks,
thus Christ of his Spirit I did deprave.

I might liken my self with a woful heart,
unto the dumb Man in Luke the Eleven,
from whence Christ caused the Devil to depart,
but shortly after he took the other leven.

My time thus, good Lord, so quickly I spent,
alas, I shall dye the sooner therefore,
O Lord, I find it written in thy Testament,
that thou hast mercy enough in store,

For such Sinners as the Scripture saith,
that will gladly repent and follow thy word,
which I will not deny whilst I have breath,
for Prison, Fire, Faggot, or fierce Sword.

Strengthen me, good Lord, in thy trust to stand,
for the bloody Butchers have me at their will,
Which their daughter-knives ready drawn in hand,
my simple Carcass to devour and kill.

O Lord, forgive me my Offence,
for I have offended thee very sore,
Take therefore my sinful Body from hence,
then shall I this Creature offend thee no more.

I would wish all Creatures and faithful friends,
for to keep from this Gardener's hands,
For he will bring them soon unto their ends,
with cruel Torments of fierce fire-brands.

I dare not presume for him to pray,
because the truth of him it is well known,
But since that time he hath gone away,
and much pestilent Seed abroad hath sown.

Because that now I have no space,
the cause of my death trulp to show,
I trust that hereafter that by God's holy Grace,
that all faithful Men shall plainly know.

To thee, O Lord, I bequeath my Spirit,
that art the Work-master of thy same,
It is thine Lord, take it of right,
my Carcass on Earth I leave from whence it came.

Although to Ashes it be now bur ned,
I know thou can't rattle it again;
In the same likeness as thou it framed,
in Heaven with thee evermore it shall remain.

A rare Example of a Virtuous maid in Paris,
Who was by our own Mother procured to be put in Prison,
thinking thereby to compel her to Popery; but she continued to the
end, and finished her Life in the Fire.

The Tune is, *O Man in Desperation, &c.*

I was a Lady's Daughter
of Paris properly,
Her Mother her commanded
to Pals that she should die:
O pardon me, dear Mother,
her Daughter dear did say,
Unto that filthy Idol
I never can obey.

With weeping and wailing,
her Mother then did go,
To assemble her Kinsfolks,
that they the truth may know;
Who being then assembled,
they did this Maiden call,
And put her into Prison,
to fear her there withal.

But where they thought to fear her,
she did most strong endure,
Although her Years was tender,
her faith was firm and sure;
She weigh'd not their allurements,
she fear'd not fiery flame,
She hop'd through Christ her Saviour,
to have immortal fame.

Before the Judge they brought her,
thinking that she would turn,
And there she was condemned,
in Fire for to burn;
Instead of Golden Bracelets,
with Cords they bound her fast;
My God grant me with patience
(quoth) she to dye at last.

And on the morrow after,
which was her Dying-day,
They strip this ill Damsel,
out of her rich Array,
Her Chain of Gold so costly,
away from her they take,
And she again most joyfully
did all the World forsake.

Unto the place of Torment,
they brought her speedily,
With heart and mind most constant
she willing was to dye;
But seeing many Ladies,
assembled in that place,
These words she then pronounced,
lamenting of their case:

You Ladies of this City,
mark well my words (quoth she)
Although I shall be burned,
yet do not pity me;
Yourselfes I rather pity,
I weep for your Decay,
Amend your time, fair Ladies,
and do no time decay.

Then came her Mother weeping,
her Daughter to behold,
And in her hand she brought her,
a Book covered with Gold:
Throw hence, quoth she, that Book,
condem it from my sight;
And bring me hither my Bible,
wherein I take delight.

But my distressed Mother,
why weep you & be content,
You have to death delivered me,
most like an Innocent;
Tormenter do thine Office
on me when thou think'st best,
But God my Heavenly father,
will bring my Soul to Rest.

But O! my aged father,
where-er thou dost lye,
Thou know'st not thy poor Daughter
is ready for to dye;
But yet amongst the Angels,
in Heaven I hope to dwell;
Therefore my loving father,
I bid thee now farewell.

Farewel likewise my Mother,
adieu my friends all,
God grant that you by others,
may never feel such woe;
Forsake your Superstition,
the cause of mortal strife,
Embrace God's Religion,
for which I lose my life.

When all these words were ended,
then came the Man of Death,
Who kindled soon a Fire
which kept this Virgin's breath
To Christ her only Saviour
she did her Soul commend,
farewel (quoth she) good People
and thus she made an end.